PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

WORLD PARISH

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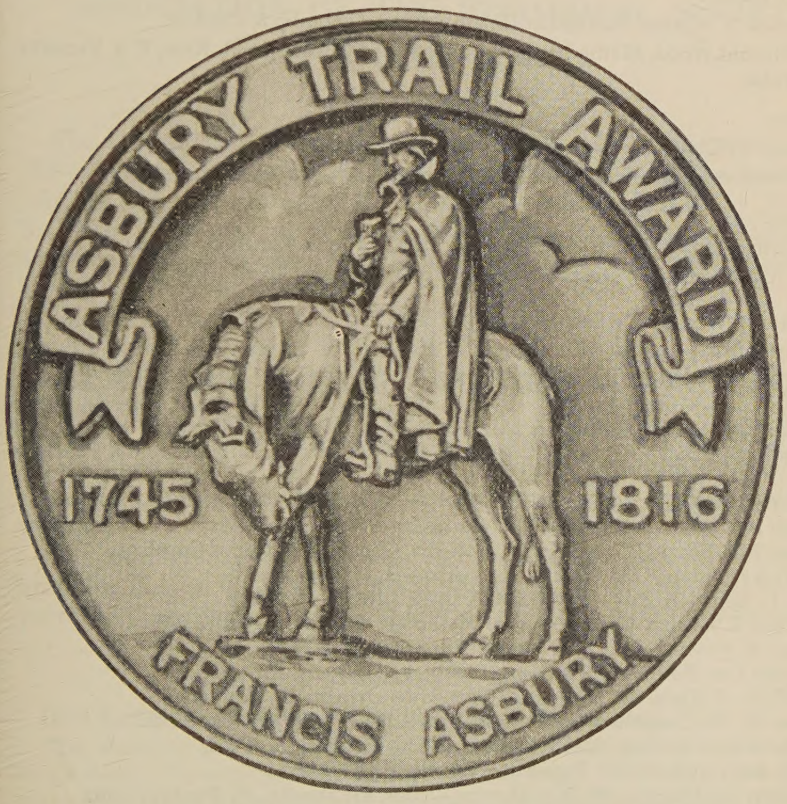

This medal and a certificate is conferred by the Boy Scouts of America on Scouts who hike the Asbury Trail over which Asbury and McKendree crossed the mountains from Tennessee into North Carolina in 1810.

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MINUTES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ASSOCIATION OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

WASHINGTON, D. C.

November 3, 1960

The Executive Committee of the American Association of Methodist Historical Societies met in the Commodore Room of the Manger Annapolis Hotel, Washington, D. C., at 10: 00 A.M. on Thursday, November 3, 1960. Dr. Lester A. Welliver, First Vice President, presided in the absence of the President, Bishop T. Otto Nall. Devotions were conducted by Dr. W. Guy Smeltzer.

The roll was called and the following members were present: Lester A. Welliver, Frederick E. Maser, Douglas Chandler, Lawrence Sherwood, J. B. Cain, Elmer T. Clark, Mrs. Kenneth Stahl, C. Wesley Christman, John Hoon, Oscar T. Olson, Jacob S. Payton, J. Manning Potts, W. Guy Smeltzer, Leland Case. Edwin Schell, of the Baltimore Conference Society, was present as a visitor. Mrs. Stahl made a statement concerning the absentees and the reasons for their inability to be present.

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive Committee and the Policy Committee were approved as printed and circulated, including the election of the officers selected by the Policy Committee.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Executive Secretary read his report as follows:

The work of the Association of Methodist Historical Societies continues to develop. The organization has existed on paper for a long time but many remember when it was without funds and its meetings included the few persons who were willing to come together at their own expense and engage in informal talks. For the benefit of the new members of the Committee some history will be recited.

We had no funds until 1948, when I was able to induce the World Service Council to grant $6,000; this paid postage and stationery expenses but could not provide an office or staff. Since that time I have dealt, with the World Service authorities constantly, securing $12,000 in 1952, $20,000 in 1956, and $39,000 in 1960.

In 1947 the Ecumenical Methodist Conference formed the International Methodist Historical Society with our Association as its American arm. A much more important step was taken at Oxford in 1951, when an annotated edition of *The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury* was projected and turned over to us for editorial supervision. This was completed in 1958 and published simultaneously in this country and Great Britain. An *Encyclopedia of Methodism* was endorsed at the same time and we are now working on this project.

In 1952 conditions made it possible for me to give up my work as Missionary Secretary and devote more time to the Historical Association and the World Methodist Council on a token salary. By 1955 the World Methodist Building at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, was erected and I placed therein my Methodist library and extensive collection of Wesleyana. In 1956 we secured a larger appropriation, our Constitution was printed in the *Discipline*, office help was secured, and for the first time the Association was fairly launched as a fully recognized agency of the Church.

We are now installed in a beautiful fireproof building which is furnished without cost as headquarters. The historical collection in the World Methodist Building continues to grow and it is now in many respects the world's finest and largest. One new acquisition is a magnificent Jackson portrait of John Wesley, which was presented by Mr. Charles C. Parlin of New York. We have also the Hunter, Salisbury and Hitt portraits. We have in recent months secured numerous letters of Wesley, Asbury, Coke, McKendree and other early leaders as well as a considerable collection of Methodist Protestant materials. Our librarian is making progress in the collection of photographs and autographs of the Bishops of all branches of Methodism. Our collection of the Presidents of the British Conference is complete, and the only one in existence.

Jurisdictional and Conference Societies

We have functioning Historical Societies in the Northeastern, Southeastern, North Central, and South Central Jurisdictions. We have not been able, in spite of several efforts, to secure an organization in the Central Jurisdiction, and the Society in the Western Jurisdiction seems to have passed out of existence.

There are about 75 Annual Conference Societies, many of which may be called "paper organizations" and some of which have good programs of work. In Missouri the Societies are promoting a new History of Missouri Methodism. There is a new Society in Northern Virginia, where work has been done on a history of the ancient Leesburg Methodist Church. In North Carolina Mrs. Louise Stahl has prepared a series of a dozen brief sketches of early Methodist persons and institutions in the state; these are being printed week by week in the North Carolina Christian Advocate and will be reprinted in

a booklet and sent to all pastors in the state. This type of historical cultivation on the conference level is very valuable and should be undertaken by all the Societies.

We continue to receive printed histories of local churches and frequently cooperate in their preparation. Our library now has one hundred or more such books.

Organization

The *Discipline* provides that this Executive Committee is composed of its own officers, the American officers of the World Methodist Council and the International Methodist Historical Society, the Presidents of the Jurisdictional Societies, the editor of the *Christian Advocate,* and six persons named by the Council of Bishops. The full membership will not be known until next year. The Policy Committee, under power given it at our meeting in 1959, met in July and perfected the organization. There were no changes aside from the members appointed by the Bishops and the newly-elected Jurisdictional officers.

Relationships

The Association has world-wide status through its relationships with the World Methodist Council and the International Methodist Historical Society. This is provided in the *Discipline.* The functions of these bodies are interlocking through a joint Secretariat and members of the Executive Committee. The World Methodist Council owns the World Methodist Building and provides headquarters for the Association without cost. Expenses are shared according to the financial resources of each, which means that the Council pays two-thirds of the administrative costs, thus in effect doubling the budget of the Historical Association. Plans are now under way for establishing an office near the United Nations in New York, which will also be a joint office without cost to the Association. These arrangements are most advantageous to the Association, which could by no means continue its present operations on any other basis.

The General Conference

The General Conference took some important actions affecting the work of the Historical Association. It approved our financial askings in full. It also approved the askings of Saint George's and John Street Churches and Barratt's Chapel, and these funds are remitted to the churches through the Association.

It also, on our recommendation, officially designated six new sites as Shrines of American Methodism; in 1940 it so designated the Strawbridge House in Maryland, St. George's Church, John Street Church, and Barratt's Chapel. The six new ones are as follows:

1. Saint Simons Island in Georgia, the scene of the labors of John and Charles Wesley.
2. The Green Hill House near Louisburg, North Carolina, where in 1785 Asbury and Coke held the first Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

3. Rehoboth Church near Union, West Virginia, oldest Protestant Church west of the Alleghenies, built in 1786, where Asbury held Conferences in 1792, 1793, and 1796, and where he ordained the first preacher ever ordained west of the mountains.
4. The Wyandotte Indian Mission at Upper Sandusky, Ohio, where John Stewart established his mission in 1819, which led to the organization of the Board of Missions.
5. The Edward Cox House near Bluff City, Tennessee, erected in 1775, where was held the first prayer meeting west of the Blue Ridge Mountains.
6. Old McKendree Chapel near Jackson, Missouri, erected in 1819, the oldest west of the Mississippi.

The Association hopes to prepare a list of Methodist landmarks or important historical spots in all or most of the States and publish a guidebook or road map.

Bicentenary of Methodists Origins

The General Conference also committed to the Association the whole matter of observing the Bicentennial of the beginnings of American Methodism, instructing it to consult with all interested persons and work out a mutually acceptable plan to be submitted to the General Conference in 1964. In view of the differing claims to priority this will not be easy. It is planned to publish a book on Methodist origins, including (1) a statement on the work of Whitefield, (2) the majority report of 1916 favoring Maryland, entitled, *The Origin of Methodism in America*, (3) the minority report favoring New York, entitled, *The First Methodist Society in America*, and (4) a statement about the beginnings in Virginia. This has been approved by the Policy Committee.

The Bicentenary of Methodism in the British West Indies was observed in October, 1960. I was not able to attend but sent a telegram of felicitations on behalf of this body. Two or three other persons were present from this country.

The next few years will witness a number of Methodist anniversaries. The following may be mentioned:

1961—170th Anniversary of the death of John Wesley and the 190th Anniversary of the arrival of Asbury in America.

1963—260th Anniversary of the birth of Wesley, 225th Anniversary of the Aldersgate experience, and 190th Anniversary of the first Conference in America.

1965—220th Anniversary of the birth of Francis Asbury.

1966—150th Anniversary of the death of Asbury.

Plans are already under way for the observance of the 225th Anniversary of Wesley's Aldersgate experience in 1963 under the auspices of the Board of Evangelism. This will take the form of great conferences on evangelism in several cities throughout the world. One of these will be in Savannah.

Dictionary of World Methodism

The Association and the World Methodist Council have been planning jointly to prepare a *Dictionary of World Methodism*. It is getting under way gradually. Editors have been secured in several countries and two conferences have been held with the British group.

This is a very large project which will require several years to complete. The first articles that have been received departed so far from the norm that all had to be completely rewritten in our office. We have in our budget $5,000 per year for this *Dictionary* and the World Methodist Council budget includes the same amount. This will all be needed but expenses will be lighter during the first year or two. The Policy Committee voted that the fund should be cumulative, the amount unused in any year being carried forward and placed in a separate account for later use. The World Methodist Council has been asked to take similar action. This seems to be the only way the whole appropriation can be used for the project. It will be necessary to secure extra help on this at an early date.

Anniversary Day

In cooperation with *Together* magazine we have designated the first Sunday in January as "Anniversary Day", in the hope that it will develop into a perpetual commemoration of the Christmas Conference and the origin of Methodism in America. We will do what we can to promote this through the Church press and in other ways and will try to make some literature available to the pastors. The cooperation of the members of this Executive Committee will be helpful.

History of American Methodism

Work on the proposed *History of American Methodism* and the *History of British Methodism* has been previously reported. The British are further along than we are but our Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Emory Bucke, has outlined chapters and assigned them to authors. The works will include volumes of important Methodist documents. Another volume is needed to cover the areas of World Methodism not included in the British and American works but our British friends do not seem inclined to cooperate in this, claiming they have no authority from the Conference to do so. I have conferred with the American publishers about this and hope that they will produce the additional volume. I have offered our full cooperation.

Elmer T. Clark
Executive Secretary

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer submitted the following report:

At the close of our fiscal year, May 31, 1960, our books were audited and the report filed with the Council on World Service as required. It showed a cash balance of $2,675.86, which was considerably less than the balance at the close of the previous year.

An increased budget came into effect on June 1st, and as of November 1st we had a cash balance on hand of $3,407.23.

Budget

Our present budget was approved by the Council on World Service and Finance and adopted by the General Conference. We therefore feel that we must adhere closely to it, although the Secretary and Treasurer have authority to vary it as may be advisable. The budget is as follows:

I. Salaries	$ 7,500.00
II. Office Personnel	5,000.00
III. Office Expenses	6,000.00
IV. Meetings and Travel	6,000.00
V. Editorial and Publications	5,000.00
VI. Dictionary of World Methodism	5,000.00
VII. Archives Materials	3,000.00
VIII. Miscellaneous and Contingent	1,500.00
Total	$39,000.00

Perhaps it should be said that the Secretary does not accept the full salary, and the difference is available for extra help and related expenses.

The item for the *Dictionary of World Methodism* is cumulative, and the unused amount in any year will be set aside in a special fund for later use. This is because the costs will be less in the early stages of the work but the total amount will be needed before the project is completed. A similar item in the budget of the World Methodist Council is being handled in the same way.

It is known that our actual operating expenses are in excess of this budget, since we work in cooperation with the World Methodist Council, and that body shares in the administrative costs and provides offices without charge.

Methodist Shrines

The General Conference made the following appropriations for Methodist Shrines:

Saint George's Church, Philadelphia	$2,500.00
John Street Church, New York	2,000.00
Barratt's Chapel, Delaware	1,000.00

These amounts are paid to the Association and remitted on a quarterly basis to the churches. The Council on World Service and Finance would not make a direct appropriation to a local church but ruled that all such askings must come through the Association. The amounts were asked by the churches themselves and were transmitted with our recommendation. We have no other relation to these funds.

Mrs. Kenneth Stahl, *Treasurer*

Actions on Reports

On motion of Frederick E. Maser, the Committee expressed gratitude to the Executive Secretary and Treasurer for their work and reports.

On motion of Oscar T. Olson, the Executive Secretary was asked to expand sections of his report into a history of the development and relationships of the Association.

On motion of Leland Case, the officers were asked to collect the materials prepared for the 175th anniversary of the Christmas Conference, the Embury-Heck commemoration, and the 200th anniversary of the birth of Richard Allen, and preserve them in the archives of the World Methodist Building. C. Wesley Christman and Frederick E. Maser joined in the discussion and the motion was adopted.

Journal and Letters of Asbury

There was discussion of the *Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury*. It was pointed out that several additional letters had been located and the search was continuing. J. Manning Potts stated that there were some errors in the letters; he explained these and mentioned some criticisms. Jacob S. Payton stated that he had studied the criticisms and found them "picayunish" and the errors without significance. Leland Case spoke in praise of the work and it was commended by vote of the Committee. The whole matter of securing and editing additional letters and dealing with errors and criticisms was referred to Elmer T. Clark and J. Manning Potts.

Jurisdictional Reports

Reports for the Jurisdictional Societies were made by C. Wesley Christman and John Hoon. J. B. Cain reported for the Southeastern Jurisdictional Society in the absence of its President, Dr. George H. Jones.

Anniversary Day

Leland Case made a report concerning Anniversary Day, as mentioned in the report of the Executive Secretary. By vote of the Committee, Anniversary Day was adopted as an annual observance of the Christmas Conference and the beginnings of Methodism in America. The Executive Secretary and Leland Case were named a committee on the development of materials for this observance. It was pointed out that since the Christmas Conference founded the first Methodist college in America, the Anniversary Day observance might include Student Recognition Day, and the Executive Secretary was asked to contact the proper secretaries of the Board of Education with reference to this. Oscar T. Olson stated that John Wesley's Covenant Service might be used in connection with the observance.

Leland Case reported on what *Together* Magazine had published in connection with the 175th Anniversary of the Christmas Conference. He also mentioned the Wyandotte Mission, which had been approved by the General Conference as one of the shrines of American Methodism. He continued his statement to include some plans which the magazine had for future historical articles and picture sections. The thanks of the Committee were expressed to Dr. Case and the magazine for this work.

Cokesbury College

Oscar T. Olson presented an excerpt from the report of the Public Relations Committee to the General Conference Commission on Christian Higher Education at Kansas City in 1959. The document included a motion that a special body be commissioned to study the matter proposed. This was referred to Elmer T. Clark and Leland Case. The document was as follows:

Cokesbury College—The American Dream

The principal purpose was to discuss the suggestion for a memorial to Cokesbury College at Abingdon, Maryland 18 miles north of Baltimore.

Cokesbury—named for Bishops Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury—was a three-story brick building, 108x40 feet. It formally opened on December 6, 1787. Nine years later it failed to survive a second fire. Those are the bare-bone facts of history.

Today, bleak headstones jut along the low ridge that was Cokesbury's campus and if antiquarians hadn't marked the corners of the building, its precise location would be conjectural. To visit the site on a gray wintry day is less than an inspiring experience—until one realizes that here daring young men dreamed what historian James Truslow Adams called The American Dream.

It is "America's distinctive and unique gift to mankind," he wrote in *The Epic of America,* for it is "that dream of a land in which life shall be better and richer and fuller for every man with opportunity for each according to his ability or achievement."

Helping Others—A Methodist Characteristic

Pouring dynamics into The American Dream was the corollary concept of sharing with others our cultural heritage so that men the more effectively and graciously shall serve man and God. Such an out-reaching and out-giving concern for others is of the essence of Methodism and explains why, though it came to these shores long after other major Protestant groups, it soon became the most numerous. John Wesley, be it remembered, wrote, "A Short History of *The People* called Methodists"—setting the still-dominant pattern for emphasis upon the individual. It was carried by circuit riders along lonely wilderness trails; it reinforced the zeitgeist of the frontiersman whose first thought, after food and shelter, was churches and schools.

Education—Formal and Informal

Methodist accent on education—both without and within classrooms—flows from a unique ecclesiastical fact: *Methodism was born and cradled in a University.* From ivied Oxford came the Wesley brothers to preach and to teach in Georgia and at the University of Pennsylvania a statue commemorates the role of their fellow Methodist Oxonian, George Whitefield, in launching that school.

Eton's classic halls supplied John Dickins who, in today's language, rates as the "idea-man" of early American Methodism. He it was who suggested that the new church emerging from Anglican "societies" be named Methodist Episcopal. He it was who in 1789 loaned $600 to print books and tracts for the circuit riders, launching the Methodist Publishing House. And as early as 1780—four years before the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized—he was raising funds and urging Asbury to found a Methodist school.

Dickins' dream came true at American Methodism's founding Conference at Baltimore. The year was 1784. Asbury, who was close to the needs of the hinterland, favored a simple school but Coke, a Doctor of Civil Law fresh from Oxford, insisted upon a college. It was Dickins' agile mind, no doubt, that reconciled their differences with the coined word that honored both. And so a college came into being at Abingdon called Cokesbury.

Those are Methodist words—Abingdon and Cokesbury. Their graphic symbol is the colophon of the Abingdon Press and the Cokesbury bookstores—the circuit rider on horseback, his saddlebags bulging with reading matter. But around the name Cokesbury also clusters Methodism's unquenched devotion to higher education.

Cokesbury College smouldered in its ashes—but its soul went marching on. More than 1,000 academies, colleges, and universities have been launched by Methodists. Some soon disappeared, others served until tax-supported systems caught up with human needs, or they acquired other sponsors. But Methodists still start colleges, as Dr. John O. Gross noted in *Together* last October. Today Methodism leads all Protestant denominations in America with more than 130 church-related schools including 8 universities.

Needed! A Memorial for Cokesbury

Here is a great glory of the church that was born in a University—one that should be dramatized unforgettably. "Take from the altar of the past not ashes but the fire," someone has said. Cokesbury offers that opportunity—lifting from history the fire of the on-going American Dream.

Your committee recommends that the site at Abingdon, named by the 1940 General Conference as a "Shrine of Methodism," be marked simply but suitably. But it also recommends that an impressive and useful memorial be created at some point "where cross the crowded ways of life," perhaps at nearby Washington, D. C.

As various members of the Committee have later "brainstormed" the idea, outline of a plan has emerged for creation at the Nation's Capitol a great American Methodist Center, polarized around Methodism's emphasis on development of the individual—in short, education. Already major component parts exist which, like bits of a jigsaw puzzle, need but to be pulled into a master pattern.

Opportunity at Washington

Recently, the Board of Temperance with the approval of the World Service and Finance Council, purchased 20 sightly acres on heights overlooking the city of Washington. They adjoin land already stamped Methodist by The American University, Wesley Seminary, and Sibley Hospital. Backed by imagination, high strategy, and revisioned cooperation, this new tract could be developed into a major magnet for the Methodist contingent of the more than six million people who, according to the Board of Trade, annually visit Washington.

At the corner of this newly acquired tract is Ward Circle which, perhaps, could be renamed *Cokesbury Circle* and set off by statues of Bishops Coke and Asbury. Fronting upon it could be *Cokesbury Chapel*, reproducing the central building of Oxford's Christchurch College, or at least be surmounted by a replica of its famous Tom's Tower. A gifted architect could plan *Corridors of Records* in bronze, listing schools started by Methodists with stones from and inscriptions about those that live. Mementoes might be added from such precursors as Oxford, the Sorbonne, even Plato's Academy.

Unleased imagination could conjure up other fruitful possibilities such as:

—a *Museum of Methodism*, replete with dioramas, with a place of special honor for the bell of old Cokesbury, still extant.

—*A Quadrangle,* in Ford's Dearborn Village Style, with borrowings from Williamsburg, of historic Methodist log meeting houses, churches, and parsonages (of which a surprising number still exist.);
—*A Repository of Methodism,* drawing on widely dispersed manuscripts and books of interest both to research scholars and to tourists;
—*A Veritable "Methodist Westminster,"* with memorials—perhaps with graves for Asbury, William Watters (first native American preacher) and others;
—*A Hall of Methodist Fame,* with niches for leaders of the future;
—*Offices of Church Boards and Agencies* for which a Washington location is deemed appropriate;
—*A Tour Center* becoming a point of departure for tours to Abingdon and other Methodist landmarks;
—A *Methodist Home* for those who might desire to live adjacent to cultural facilities offered.

What Should Be Done Can Be Done

Your committee is cognizant of the practical problems—but suggests it is in the Methodist tradition that big things which should be done can be done and are done. It was Daniel Burnham, the renowned city planner, who counselled: "Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood. Make big plans; aim high and hope and work. . . ."

We suggest that such a Center, imaginatively conceived and audaciously executed, would feed the nostalgic longing of our people for roots would engender a new sense of belonging to the land on which we live, and would contribute fruitfully toward a churchmanship that achieves for the human spirit a dignity, a breadth, and a sense of high destiny.

Such could be the memorial to Cokesbury. And in decades and centuries to come, when visitors ask, "What mean ye by these stones?" its grounds and walls will give answer: "What is past is prologue," and the American Dream lives!

Miscellaneous Items

J. B. Cain moved that the Committee express its appreciation to the Board of Education for the Children's course which it had prepared on Methodist history. This was adopted.

Elmer T. Clark reported on the approaching Bicentenary of Methodist Beginnings, stating that dates had been set for observances in New York, Maryland, and Northern Virginia. He also reported his plans for the production of a volume on Methodist Origins as stated in his report. There was discussion of these items and the proposed volume was commended and adopted.

Edwin Schell distributed some documents, containing copies of certain minutes of the Baltimore Conference. W. Guy Smeltzer stated that the minutes of the Conferences down to 1844 should be reprinted, and he was asked to prepare a proper recommendation on this for a future meeting.

By vote the Committee decided to hold its next meeting in the World Methodist Building at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, the exact date to be determined by the Secretary after studying the dates of the various Annual Conferences.

The Secretary called for the appointment of a committee on Secretarial Policy, to begin studying the whole question of policy, including the election of another Secretary. This was voted. The committee named was composed of Bishop T. Otto Nall, Lester A. Welliver, Elmer T. Clark, Mrs. Kenneth Stahl, J. B. Cain, and Edwin L. Jones.

The Committee adjourned.

LESTER A. WELLIVER, *Presiding Officer*
ELMER T. CLARK, *Secretary*

EDITORS HONORED BY THE GOVERNMENT

On December 29, 1960, the United States Government gave a luncheon at the Statler Hilton Hotel in New York City in honor of certain scholars who edited the works of great Americans as recommended by the National Historical Publications Commission. The affair was sponsored by the commission.

Dr. Elmer T. Clark was invited because of his work on *The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury*. This was the first of the recommended work to be completed and it was highly praised by Dr. Philip M. Hamer, Executive Director of the Commission.

Other American leaders whose literary remains have been or are being edited are Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, Madison, Hamilton, Clay, Polk, Hayes, Roosevelt, Gallatin, Johnson, and Woodrow Wilson.

THE METHODIST CLASS MEETING AS AN INSTRUMENT OF CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE, I: THE EARLY PHASE

By Dr. Franklin H. Littell

Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University
Dallas, Texas

Perhaps no subject has excited more attention in ecumenical circles of recent years than the rediscovery of the laity, and with it the discussion of the education of "lay theologians" and the training of the layman for his role as citizen of the Two Cities. The French Reformed professor of jurisprudence, Professor Jacques Ellul, has recently summarized the problem:

> There used to be a style of life peculiar to the Middle Ages. In the sixteenth century, there was a style of life carried on by Reformed Christians, and it is extremely interesting to note where it was opposed to the style of life of the Renaissance. Then there was the bourgeois style of life which no longer has any spiritual quality. There is the Communist style of life. There is no longer a Christian style of life.

To carry the discussion required by such radical criticism as this, the Department on the Laity of the World Council of Churches has recently held several consultations and issued a number of papers on the training and role of the laity in various periods of Church History.[1] The secretary of the Department, Rev. Hans-Ruedi Weber, has recently discussed the question of a new style of lay Christian witness in a comparative study of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Letters and Papers from Prison*.[2] In these current discussions, it is becoming apparent that a high view of the layman's role has marked significance for the doctrine of the Church; it is a singular progression that the rediscovery of the Bible, the rediscovery of the church, the rediscovery of the laity, should now be followed by live discussions on the way of holy living and practical sainthood. A paper on the Methodist Class Meeting as a "School of Christ" may have more than antiquarian interest, therefore, although we shall endeavor to present the material in a way appropriate to the deliberations of a professional meeting of Church Historians. If the practice of our craft is in a real sense the carrying on of an informed dialogue with the past, then no profuse apologies are necessary for presenting a body of material which has certain relevance for contemporary issues before the church.*

The Beginning of the Class-Meeting

The Class Meeting was developed in early Methodism as an instrument for training up laymen in holy living. In spite of John Wesley's deep personal indebtedness to the Herrnhuter, he was no mystic:[3] he accepted the emphasis upon saving faith as an experience,[4] as it had been authenticated in his own life, but he believed that inward religion could only be kept alive by the vigorous practice of the means of grace

—among which he came to reckon meeting in class. His difference with Calvinism, which has been exaggerated, was primarily on the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints: without energetic discipline, and attention to the social principle of Christianity, the faithful could and probably would fall from the path leading unto perfection, into doubt, unbelief and spiritual shipwreck. In adopting Zinzendorf's repudiation of the possibility of an individualistic Christianity and giving it to the English-speaking world, Wesley was not simply affirming the classical Christian principle that a believing man practices brotherhood-love toward those of the household of faith. He was stating what was in his eyes a demonstrable and practical fact, verified by the most precise scientific observation: that no Christian could survive spiritually in this kind of a world without the active practice of common prayer and the common life. Sin was contagious; he intended to make goodness social, and believed that Christ so purposed for His Church. Of the various institutions John Wesley introduced to plant and cultivate a living faith, none was so representative of his view of the Christian life as the Class Meeting, and none was more characteristic of Methodism through generations.

According to Wesley's own report, he more or less stumbled upon the plan. As he later accounted for it in his *Plain Account* (1749), the beginning was as follows:

> At length, while we were thinking of quite another thing, we struck upon a method for which we have cause to bless God ever since. I was talking with several of the society in Bristol concerning the means of paying the debts there, when one stood up and said, "Let every member of the society give a penny a week till all are paid." Another answered, "But many of them are poor, and cannot afford to do it." "Then," said he, "put eleven of the poorest with me; and if they can give anything, well: I will call on them weekly; and if they can give nothing, I will give for them as well as for myself. And each of you call on eleven of your neighbors weekly; receive what they give, and make up what is wanting." It was done. In a while, some of these informed me, they found such and such a one did not live as he ought. It struck me immediately, "This is the thing; the very thing we have wanted so long." I called together all the leaders of the classes (so we used to term them and their companies), and desired, that each would make a particular inquiry into the behaviour of those whom he saw weekly. They did so. Many disorderly walkers were detected. Some turned from the evil of their ways. Some were put away from us. Many say it was fear, and rejoiced unto God with reverence.
>
> As soon as possible, the same method was used in London and all other places. Evil men were detected and reproved. They were borne with for a season. If they forsook their sins, we received them gladly; if they obstinately persisted therein, it was openly declared that they were not of us. The rest mourned and prayed for them, and yet rejoiced, that, as far as in us lay, the scandal was rolled away from the society.

He then went on to give instructions (since his view of historical record was practical rather than antiquarian):

> It is the business of a leader, (1) To see each person in his class, once a week at the least, in order to inquire how their souls prosper; to advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require; to receive what they are willing to give, toward

the relief of the poor. (2) To meet the minister and the stewards of the society, in order to inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that are disorderly and will not be reproved; to pay to the stewards what they have received of their several classes in the week preceding.

Then he exclaimed, in concluding the report:

It can scarce be conceived what advantages have been reaped from this little prudential regulation. Many now happily experienced that Christian fellowship of which they had not so much as an idea before. They began to 'bear one another's burdens,' and naturally to 'care for each other'.[6]

In spite of this later statement, however, it is known that Wesley and his associates had experimented with various types of face-to-face groups for some time before settling upon the form and procedure of the Class Meeting. We shall not go into the history of the "Holy Club" at Oxford here, nor discuss the special society which he founded for the cultivation of practical Christianity during his brief stay in Georgia. Nor—the common interpretation to the contrary—was the Pietist pattern of small group work, the *collegia pietatis,* which he had personally seen in Germany as well as in London and of which he heartily approved,[7] Wesley's major source of information and evidence on the fruitful effect of intentional fellowship. There had been from 1678 on a number of Religious Societies—"fellowship groups" or "house churches" as we might say today[8]—fathered by devout souls desirious of combatting the widespread unbelief and dissipation in the Church of England which followed on the Restoration of 1660, the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the subsequent expulsion of the Non-jurors. Up to a hundred of these groups were known in London and Westminster, with strict rules for membership drawn from within the Anglican tradition. Out of their ranks came the founding of the Society for the Reformation of Manners, 1692, the SPCK, 1698 99, and the SPG, 1701.[9] Among those who identified themselves with the Non-jurors' protest against conformity to an outward display of casual religion were Wesley's grandfather, Dr. Annesley, and his father, Rev. Samuel Wesley (1662-1735), who published as well as preached in praise of the Religious Societies' work.

The Bishop of London, Dr. Wand, has lately commented upon the great loss suffered by the Church of England in the expulsion of the Non-jurors, who counted in their ranks the archbishop, eight bishops and over four hundred of the clergy. Five of these eight bishops had taken part in the famous opposition to the form of James II's 1688 Declaration of Indulgence, but they suffered conscientious scruples in breaking their former oath and taking oath of allegiance to William and Mary. Their political position and consequent deprivation were a natural result of the doctrine of the divine right of kings, with its corollary of passive obedience to the will of the sovereign, but it would be a mistake to emphasize the political factor: such men as the Non-jurors

held a High Church view of the self-sufficing spiritual authority of the church, and opposed political meddling in the affairs of the Church. In losing them the Established Church lost the most historically-minded and also the most devout from its ranks, although the traditions of worship which they maintained influenced liturgical reforms throughout the entire Anglican Communion when they re-entered the fold in a later generation.[10] It is appropriate that Wesley should have found among the meetings of the Non-jurors exercises of discipline and devotion which excited his admiration and imitation. His loyalty to a "high" view of the church, catholic and apostolic, remained constant throughout his life.

There was another important source of his practical piety. His admiration for certain classics of pious devotion has been frequently noted and commented upon: Jeremy Taylor's *Rules and Exercises of Holy Living and Holy Dying* (1650, 1651), Thomas a Kempis' *The Christian Pattern*, or a *Treatise of the Imitation of Jesus Christ* (10th Stanhope edition: London, 1721; he also used the Latin text of Sebastian Castellio),[11] William Law's *On Christian Perfection* (1726) and *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* (1728).[12] George Croft Cell has also pointed out his indebtedness to Juan de Valdes' *Alfabeto cristiano* (1536).[13] Of great importance, however, and but little noted, in his indebtedness to Richard Baxter.[14] A close study of *The Reformed Pastor* (1656), which Wesley heartily recommended to his preachers and the members of the Societies,[15] reveals not only an astonishing similarity between Baxter's recommendations on practical piety and Wesley's but also a remarkable likeness in the total view of the church: catholic and universal, prayerful and disciplined, peaceful and avoiding party strife, recapturing the faith and simplicity and practical Christianity of the Early Church.[16]

Among Protestant manuals of practical piety, no book—with the exception of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678, 1684)—has had greater influence than the manual of admonitions and advices which Baxter, the Puritan, prepared for the associated Anglican, Presbyterian and Congregational pastors who convenanted in the last years of the Commonwealth to avoid party strife and vigorously further practical religion in their own lives and among the converted in their homes. With many pulpits vacant, with unbelief and dissipation still widespread among the casual and party strife wasting the strength of the earnest, Baxter pressed the importance of ecumenical cooperation in shepherding the faithful. The Worcestershire Association was founded among the clergy not for ordination but for the exercise of voluntary church discipline. The invitation to cooperate in restoring the Church was a broad one:

> Some, it is like, will be offended that I mention with disallowance the Separatists or Anabaptists . . . and they say, that by this it appeareth, that while I pretend so much zeal for the unity of the church, I intend and endeavour the contrary. To which I answer: the thing that I desire is this. That we might all consider how far

we may hold communion together even in the same congregations, notwithstanding our different opinions; and to agree not to withdraw where it may possibly be avoided. But where it cannot, that yet we may consult how far we may hold communion in distinct congregations and to avoid that no further than is of mere necessity, principally to consult and agree upon certain rules for the management of our differences, in such manner as may be least to the disadvantage of the common Christian truths which are acknowledged by us all. Thus far would I seek peace with Arminians, Antinomians, Anabaptists, or any that hold the foundation. Yea . . . I would not refuse to consult on accomodation with moderate Baptists themselves, if their principles were not against such consultations and accomodations; and I should judge it a course which God will better approve of, than to proceed by carnal contrivances to undermine their adversaries or by cruel murders to root them out, which are their ordinary courses. . . .[17]

We are immediately reminded of John Wesley's irenical letter to Howell Harris, who had refused to join with George Whitefield and other Calvinist Methodists in attacking the Wesleys for perfectionism:

. . . we agree (1) that no man can have any power except it be given him from above; (2) that no man can merit anything but hell, seeing all other merit is in the blood of the Lamb. . . . Why then, . . . what need of this great gulf to be fixed between us? Brother, is thy heart with mine, as my heart is with thy heart? If it be, give me thy hand . . . Let us rise up together against the evildoers. Let us not weaken, but (if it be our Lord's will) strengthen one another's hands in God.[18]

Both Baxter and Wesley believed party strife to be an evidence of unbelief and spiritual laziness, and that ecumenicity and church discipline both were expected fruits of vital faith. To critics of the use of Matthew 18:17 Baxter replied:

Was not Christ himself the leader of these disciplinarians, who instituted discipline, and made His ministers the rulers or guides of His Church, and put the keys of the kingdom into their hand . . .?[19]

We do not corrupt Christianity itself, in the eyes of the world, and make them believe that to be a Christian is but to be of such an opinion, and that the Christian religion exacteth holiness no more than the false religions of the world. If the holy and unholy are permitted to be sheep of the same fold, without the use of Christian means to difference them, we do defame Christ by it.[20]

The true Church is both scripturally disciplined and catholic. It is the duty of ministers to shepherd the flock for the sake of "the most orderly building up of those that are converted, and the establishing them in the faith,"[21] and to "compassionate the poor, divided Church, and to entertain such catholic principles and charitable dispositions as tend to their own and the common peace." Baxter went on to ask:

Has anything in the world done more to lose our authority and disable us for God's service, than our differences and divisions?

And methinks a little humility should make men ashamed of that common conceit of unquiet spirits, viz., that the welfare of the Church doth so lie upon their opinions, that they must needs vent and propagate them, whatever comes of it. If they are indeed a living part of the body, the hurt of the whole will be so much their own, that they cannot desire it for the sake of any party or opinion.[22]

When John Wesley started the work of the Societies he was building to a degree on bases already laid in Anglican and Puritan piety, and he conceived the terms of Society membership broadly.

> The thing proposed in their associating themselves together was obvious to everyone. They wanted to 'flee from the wrath to come' and to assist each other in so doing. They therefore united themselves 'in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they might help each other to work out their salvation.'
>
> There is only one condition previously required in those who desire admission into this society, — 'a desire to flee from the wrath to come, to be saved from their sins'.[23]

He then experimented with various groupings, such as the Bands and the Select Societies,[24] to give special training to the most devoted and potentially more useful members. But it was with the Class Meeting that a program for the general membership was born. The Class Meeting was not a program for building an elite, but began as it remained throughout the generations—a program for the weak, the troubled, the poor, the new members. More than a century later a professor at Emory College, Georgia, could still report of the work:

> The timid and the weak, the poor, the ignorant and the obscure, are not allowed under this system to be neglected and forgotten, but are sought out and encircled within the arms of Christian fellowship and fraternal affection.[25]

The record of Wesley himself as to the circumstances surrounding the founding of the second network of classes, at London, also stressed the pastoral issue. The classes were set up in Bristol in February, 1742. In Wesley's *Journal* we read under the date of March 25th—a little more than a month later—the following entry:

> I appointed several earnest and sensible men to meet me, to whom I showed the great difficulty, I had long found of knowing the people who desired to be under my care. After much discourse, they all agreed there could be no better way to come to a sure, thorough knowledge of each person, than to divide them into classes, like those at Bristol, under the inspection of those in whom I could most confide. This was the origin of your classes at London, for which I can never sufficiently praise God; the unspeakable usefulness of the institution having ever since been more and more manifest.[26]

He rapidly incorporated the Class Meeting into the life of the societies,[27] and within five years it became one of the three major peculiar institutions of the Methodist movement—the others being the itinerancy and lay preaching. The *General Rules* were strict, and Wesley well knew that without the sustaining power of a practicing brotherhood-love they would be intolerable. But within the fellowship, and serving to discipline a started faith, they could train up the faithful in godliness and help to weed out the "disorderly walkers."[28]

John Wesley has been accused of legalism almost as often as he has been charged with mysticism. Thus, just as Richard Baxter was accused of Romanism because of the practice of group sharing and con-

fession, so Wesley had to defend himself, and in subsequent generations defenders of meeting in class have also had to distinguish between auricular confession and a frank sharing of problems of conscience and decision. Baxter met the charge with a blunt reply: "Paptists bring all their people to auricular confession. . . . In the overthrowing of this error of theirs we have run into the contrary extreme . . . we have too commonly neglected all personal instruction. . . ."[29] Wesley, too, stressed that preaching alone, even were it not neglected, would not suffice: "He insisted that those who desired to be counted as members must be enrolled in the class list, and meet weekly with the others to receive the counsels and admonitions of the appointed leader."[30] The leaders, who could not come from among the preachers,[31] were appointed by him and later the itinerants subject to his approval. "As long as I live, the people shall have no share in choosing either stewards or leaders among the Methodists. We have not, and never had, any such custom. We are no republicans, and never intend to be . . ."[32] For Wesley, the elevation of the activity and initiative of the laity never implied the weakening of the minister's responsibility or authority. We might say that the "priesthood of all believers", which he perhaps more than any other man made a force in English church life, meant for him the ennobling of the committed layman's role rather than a vulgarization of the priestly office.

As the Methodist movement expanded, Wesley's organizational genius expanded with it. But he never yielded, during his lifetime, the direct pastoral charge over preachers and members. As an American of democratic prejudices has reported it:

> Although Wesley sought in every way to improve the interests and welfare of his preachers, yet he could not stand in the least degree any opposition from them. When Alexander M'Nabe objected because Mr. Wesley brought Mr. Smyth, a regularly ordained minister, to Bristol, on the ground that the Conference appointed the preachers and not Wesley, Wesley cleared the matter up by stating in very clear terms understood by all: "The rules of our preachers were fixed by me before any Conference existed . . . above all, you are to preach when and where I appoint." Since M'Nabe would not submit, he was forced out of the society and Wesley remained as an autocrat.[33]

His care over the local societies and their classes was as exacting, and he would not seldom remove half the names from the rolls during a visitation. "To be a true Methodist meant to be a living member of one's local Society, cherishing its spirit of devotion to Christ, maintaining integrity in workaday life, and activity in neighbourly service."[34] Where the spirit of idleness or division crept in, the patriarchal hand could be heavy. In 1771, the Society in Dublin had a dispute, going back for some years, in which the class leaders had attempted to take part in the decisions which lay with the preacher; over one hundred members had been lost. Wesley went over and read the leaders a prepared paper in which he declared that the lay leaders' "sole business was (1)

to see each person in his class once a week; to inquire how their souls prosper: to advise, reprove, comfort or exhort them; (2) to receive that they are willing to give toward the expenses of the society; and, (3) to meet the assistant and stewards once a week."[35] In 1776 he wrote Joseph Benson that he had told the London Society, "Our rule is to meet a class once a week, not once in two or three. I now give you warning: I will give tickets to none in February but those who have done this."[36] The "tickets" were tokens passed for admission to the Lord's Supper.

Cause us the record to receive,
Speak, and the tokens show—
O be not faithless, but believe
In Me, who died for you!
(Charles Wesley)

We can now summarize what the Class Meeting meant in the first generation of the Wesleyan movement. Beginning as a financial measure, it rapidly took on the pastoral justification which Bishops Coke and Asbury gave it in their notes to the tenth edition of *The Discipline* (1798) for the Church in America:

> Our Society may be considered as a spiritual hospital, where souls come to be cured of their spiritual diseases.

They went on to write of the "Bands":

> The members therefore who compose our class meetings vary exceedingly in the state of their minds and the degrees of their experience. On this account it was thought necessary by our venerable leader Mr. Wesley, to establish a society of evangelical believers within the society composed of the whole body of Methodists, to which he gave the name of *the band-society*. This institution he borrowed from the practice of the primitive churches, as indeed he did almost everything he established.

And again, writing of the Class Meetings, they said:

> In short, we can truly say, that through the grace of God our classes form the pillars of our work, and, as we have before observed, are in a considerable degree our universities for the ministry.

The Class Meetings made it possible for an itinerant ministry to give much more close and careful attention to the spiritual progress of members of the societies than they received at the hands of the resident clergy of the Established Church of which they were still members. Moreover, in spite of occasional conflicts of authority and competence, the Class Meetings afforded a great sphere for training leadership and for the practice of elementary democracy: the establishment of the relationships of confidence, the decisions by consensus, which are more fundamental to the open society than parliamentarianism. The contribution of the Class Meetings to the spread of Rochdale Cooperatives and to the rise of the British Labour Party can be studied in the career of a local preacher such as J. Keir Hardie;[37] this theme is, of course, another subject from the one before us. Nevertheless it is worth noting

that, just as a bell is cast in a tight mold in order that it may ring more purely and truly, so the personality trained in the Class Meeting tended more to give forth a certain and authentic sound in public as well as churchly life. The purpose of the Class Meeting was in no sense to provide a haven from the world and its struggles and temptations: it was rather to equip and arm "tough Christians", capable of maintaining a witness in adversity as in prosperity. In this it was strikingly successful.

Methodism made one striking and original contribution to the institutions of the Church, in the Class-meeting. Never, so far as I know, in any Church had there been so near an approach to the ideal of pastoral oversight as the Class-meeting, in its perfect form, provides; and it also provides for that communion of saints which is almost as necessary for the strength and joy and the harmonious growth of the Christian life as fellowship with God.[38] (R. W. Dale)

The ideal of effective church discipline too often has been understood in the negative sense, in terms of exercise of the lesser Ban (holding back from the table of the Lord) and greater Band (expulsion). From the outside, the separating edge of fellowship no doubt created such a forbidding impression. For the faithful, however, there existed a whole fabric of positive fellowship and sustaining community which made daily incompatibility to the spirit of the age a possible life. Expulsion might be required in extreme cases, but only after appropriate warning and opportunity to reform. As the class "grew together" it became "more and more the family and less and less the law court."[39] Fellowship in such a Christian family—"family" not in the speculative and spiritualized sense but in concrete terms,—was a major force in shaping the early Methodist witness.

References

[1] Of special value is a study by George H. Williams . . . "The Role of the Layman in the Ancient Church," *Greek and Byzantine Studies* (July, 1958), pp: 9-42.

[2] "The 'Saints' in Every-day Life," in *Laity* N.5 (WCC: June, 1958), pp. 4-15.

[3] Cannon, William R., *The Theology of John Wesley* (New York and Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946), p. 61. His comment to William Law fixes the definite break from mysticism in his own experience: "I remember something of Christ our pattern, but nothing express of Christ our atonement." *The Letters of John Wesley*; ed. J. Telford (London: Epworth Press, 1931), 1st ed., I, 241-42. A letter to his brother marks the institutional severance from the Moravian societies, when he wrote Charles in 1741 that he could not join them "because their general scheme is mystical, not Scriptural." *Ibid.*, I, 353.

[4] Cell, George Croft, *The Rediscovery of John Wesley* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1935), p. 203.

[5] Cannon, William R., *op. cit.*, p. 142f.

[6] *A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists* (1749), in Welch, Herbert, ed., *Selections from the Writings of the Rev. John Wesley, M. A.* (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1918), pp. 171ff. The report as to the circumstances surrounding the founding of the Class Meetings has been repeatedly published and was circulated among the American societies by Jesse Lee's *A Short History of the Methodists* (Baltimore: Magill and Clime, 1810), pp. 12f. See Cameron, Richard M., *The Rise of Methodism:* A Source Book (New York: Philosophical Library, 1943), pp. 300f; *The Letters*, II, 296-97.

[7] In a letter to the Moravians at Marienborn and Herrnhut (September, 1738): "I greatly approve of your conferences and bands, of your method of instructing children, and in general of your great care of the souls committed to your charge." *The Letters*, I, 257.

[8] Simon, John, *John Wesley and the Religious Societies* (London: Epworth Press, 1921), esp. Ch. I. See No. 4 (WCC: April, 1958) of *A Monthly Letter About Evangelism*, for the article on "House Churches in Europe"; "There are some things which God can do with a small group that he cannot do with a large congregation."

Among the excellent discussions of the place of intentional fellowship in the Christian economy may be mentioned the following current items: Brunner, Emil, *The Church and the Oxford Group* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1937); Cammaerts, Emile, "The Work of the Christian Cell," CXLV *Church Quarterly Review* (1948) 290:241-60; Littell, Franklin H., "A Group of Ten," No. 1 *Lane Hall Pamphlet* (U. of Michigan, 1947); Shoemaker, S. M., *Creating Christian Community* (New York: The Book Stall, n.d.); Palmer, Edwin J., *Christ's Partners* (London: Church Assembly, 1947); Parsons, C. E., *The Spirit of the Christian Cell* (London: Church Assembly, 1946); Seifert, Harvey, *Fellowships of Concern* (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949); Seifert, Harvey, and Randall, Mildred, *Spiritual Power Through Fellowship Cells* (Chicago: United Christian Youth Movement, 1944); Shaull, M. Richard, "Toward the Conversion of the Church," No. 2 *Lane Ha llPamphlet* (U. of Michigan, 1948); Spencer, Malcolm, and Hewish, H. S., *Fellowship Principles and Practice* (London: Geo. Allen and Unwin, 1930); *Towards the Conversion of England* (London: Church Assembly, 1943). In addition, the theme is developed in several books by Douglas Steere, D. Elton Trueblood, and John L. Casteel.

[9] Piette, Maximin, *John Wesley in the Evolution of Protestantism* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1937), pp. 187-88; also footnote 14, p. 536. See also Leete, Frederick D., *Christian*

[10] Wand, J. W. C., *The Spirit of Church History* (London and Oxford: A. R. Mowbray and *Brotherhoods* (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1912), p. 216f.
Co., 1947), p. 105.

[11] *The Letter*, footnote 2, p. 15.

[12] Cannon, Wm. R., *op. cit.*, pp. 54f.

[13] *Op. cit.*, p. 197; Ch. VIII, "The Saints of the World."

[14] I am indebted to my colleague, Prof. James W. May, for first directing my attention to the indebtedness of Wesley to Baxter.

[15] "Minutes of several conversations between the Rev. Mr. Wesley and Others," in *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley. A. M.*; ed. T. Jackson (London: Wesleyan-Methodist Book Room, 1831), 3d ed., III, 302-07.

[16] The primitivist motif was strong in both Baxter and Wesley. A representative statement in Baxter is this: "We may talk of peace as long as we live, but we shall never obtain it but by returning to the apostolical simplicity . . ." *Gildas Salvianus: The Reformed Pastor (1656)*; ed. J. T. Wilkinson (London: Epworth Press, 1950), 2d. ed. revised, p. 105. Wesley believed that in founding the Class Meetings they were recapturing the experience of the Early Church, where those whom God sent forth "preached the Gospel to every creature. . . . But as soon as any of these were so convinced of the truth as to forsake sin and seek the gospel salvation, they immediately joined them together, took an account of their names, advised them to watch over each other, and meet these catechumens (as they were then called), apart from the great congregation, that they might instruct, exhort, and pray with them and for them according to their several necessities." See Carter, Henry, *The Methodist Heritage* (London: Epworth Press, 1951), pp. 97-98. See footnote 14, page 99: "The author cannot pass from this subject without acknowledging lifelong indebtedness to the lay Class-leader, Mr. A. Smith, in whose class he met as a youth. Mr. Smith's occupation was that of a time-keeper at Cardiff Docks." On the general theme of Christian primitivism see Littell, Franklin H., *The Free Church* (Boston: Star King Press, 1957), pp. 85f.

[17] Baxter, Richard, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-56. Among those greatly influenced by Baxter's manual have been Philip Jacob Spener, John William Fletcher, Philip Doddridge, Francis Asbury, Thomas Chalmers, Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

[18] Cameron, Richard M., *op. cit.*, p. 316.

[19] Baxter, Richard, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 142.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 124.

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 148-49.

[23] *The Letters*, II, 294.

[24] Rules of the band-societies," *The Works*, VIII, 272. See also Church, Leslie F., *The Early Methodist People* (London: Epworth Press, 1949), 2nd. ed., pp. 152f.

[25] Sasnett, W. J., "Theory of Methodist Class Meetings," V *The Methodist Quarterly Review* (So.) 2:265-84, 277.

[26] Quotation and discussion in Simons, John S., *A Manual of Instructions and Advice for Class Leaders* (London: Charles H. Kelly, 1893), pp. 3f.

[27] "I met the (Norwich) Society at five, and explained the nature and use of the meeting in the class. Upon inquiry, I found we have now about five hundred members. But an hundred and fifty of these do not pretend to meet at all. Of those, therefore, I make no account. They hang on but a single thread." Quoted in Murray, Gilbert, *The Methodist Class-Meeting* (London: Robert Cully, 1907?), p. xii.

[28] Cameron, Richard M., *op. cit.*, pp. 318-21.

[29] *The Reformed Pastor*, p. 126. Note *The Memorial of Thomas Bush:* "The one is private confession to a priest, the other is conversation among fellow Christians . . . Pardon a man

cannot give; advice and comfort, Christians are well qualified to afford." Quoted in Church, Leslie F., *op. cit.*, p. 157.

[30] Murray, Gilbert, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

[31] *The Letters*, VII, 166.

[32] *The Works*, XII, 455.

[33] Tucker, Robert L., *The Separation of the Methodists from the Church of England* (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1918), p. 77.

[34] Carter, Henry, *op. cit.*, pp. 132-33.

[35] *The Journal*, V, 404-06.

[36] Church, Leslie F., *op. cit.*, p. 162.

[37] While Hardie was organizing opposition to the Boer War and starting the Miners' Union he was preaching regularly in the Evangelical Union Church. Lowe, David, *From Pit to Parliament* (London: Labour Publ. Co., 1923), p. 19.

[38] Quoted in Church, Leslie F., *op. cit.*, p. 153.

[39] Cameron, Richard M., *op. cit.*, p. 301.

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STATEMENTS ON HISTORICAL PRIORITY IN ASBURY'S WRITINGS

by Arthur Bruce Moss

The accumulation of personal and official papers of Francis Asbury, deposited after his death at the New York Publishing House, was completely destroyed in the disastrous fire that took the building in 1836. Included were the original books of his voluminous *Journal* (1771 to 1816); his personal accounts, sermon outlines and Biblical notes; the packets of letters he had received and retained as of particular value; copies of important letters he had written; his own copies of and notes upon significant conference actions and minutes—all were lost.

Fortunately, his direct touch upon many denominational and public matters is preserved in the printed *Minutes, Disciplines,* and other similar records. He had written thousands of letters to a wide range of correspondents in England and throughout the area of the growing United States to its very periphery of 1816. Of these, about 350 are known today by publication, and others come to light as interest in our origins widens and deepens.

Early fragments of his *Journal* were published by him in the abortive American *Arminian Magazine,* (volumes for 1789 and 1790). By veritable providence, the entire *Journal* was published in 1821, providing a valuable printed version for posterity, even though the original, lost in the fire, is not available, for comparison and research. A few reputed quotations of his utterance and writing occur in journals and letters of contemporaries, and in articles in later publications. These, however, must be read critically, and taken 'cum grano salis', unless standing in thoroughly reliable source material.

The purpose of this study is to present an impartial evaluation of such statements on historical priority as appear in Asbury's extant writings. The divisions into which this material naturally falls will be discussed in the following order: - 1. *Letters.* 2. *Discipline* and *Minutes.* 3. *Journal.*

1. Letters.

In 1958, all of Asbury's letters then known to the editors, were published, with careful annotation, as the third volume of the set "The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury", edited by Drs. Elmer T. Clark, J. Manning Potts, and Jacob S. Payton (The Epworth Press, London and Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1958, 3 vols.). Since then, under the influence of that noteworthy work, a number of other letters and previously reported anecdotes have been found. Dr. Clark has edited and published these in certain issues of World Parish (February and August 1959; April and October 1960). No definite statement concerning the historical priority of American Methodism's earliest locations or societies appears in any of these available letters.

2. Discipline and Minutes.

Beginning with 1785 (following the Christmas Conference), and continuing until about the turn of the century, *Discipline* was published annually. The issuance then became quadrennial. Each edition was brought out as soon after the conclusion of the several conferences of the year, or of the general conference, as Asbury could complete the taxing procedure of preparing and editing the copy. His *Journal* carries frequent references to this onerous task, indicating his own direct and close relationship to the total manuscript. (See *Journal* entries for June 4, 1785; November 27, 1785; March 25, 1786; March 29, 1787; April 2, 1788; August 14, 1788 and note; etc.) (See also Jesse Lee, 'Short History', p. 128.)

The 1790 *Discipline* was the first in the sequence to include a 'Preface'. The Preface to the 1790 edition is presented in toto, with notes, on pages 83-84 of the volume, *Letters,* (3rd volume of the set, "Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury", noted above). This Preface bears the signatures of Bishops Asbury and Coke, attesting their responsibility for the data therein.

"During the space of thirty years past, certain persons, members of the society, emigrated from England and Ireland and settled in various parts of the country. About twenty years ago, Philip Embury, a local preacher from Ireland, began to preach in the city of New York; and formed a society of his own countrymen and the citizens. About the same time, Robert Strawbridge, a local preacher from Ireland, settled in Frederick county, in the state of Maryland, and preaching there, formed some societies."

Although standing in the 1790 Preface, this historical statement had previously appeared in the 1787 *Discipline*, as part of the answer to a particular question:- "Question 2. What was the rise of Methodism so called in America?" Then follows the statement identical with the above quotation from 1790 Preface. Both in 1787 and 1790 there were additional references to the later coming of Boardman and Pilmoor, Asbury and Wright. These do not bear on priority.

In the 1788 and 1789 *Disciplines* the statement of 1787 appears in similar position as the categorical answer to the disciplinary question on origins. (For purposes of reference, note that the exceedingly rare *Disciplines*, 1785 to 1789 inclusive, were carefully reprinted in February 1887 by Rev. Charles S. Nutter, Concord, New Hampshire, and are thus available in the form of his authentic reprints.)

In 1791, the phrase, "About twenty years ago", was altered so as to read, "In the latter end of 1766", thus presenting a closely accurate statement for the beginning of Embury's work in New York. In the same *Discipline* (1791), a new sentence appears: "The first Methodist church in New York was built in 1768 or 1769". (The deed to the John Street property is dated March 30, 1768, and Wesley Chapel was dedicated thereon, October 30, 1768.) Reference is also made to Captain Thomas Webb, but this does not bear on priority. In 1797, the word

"thirty", in the opening phrase, is changed to "many". In 1801, the first sentence is omitted, the statement about Embury reading, "In the year 1766, Philip Embury . . .". No other alterations touching upon priority were made in *Discipline* during the balance of Asbury's life time.

Summary—1. The basic historical statement in *Discipline* (1787 to 1816) stood regularly under Asbury's personal scrutiny, thus receiving his official endorsement, and representing his best opinion.

2. *New York*—The approximate date, "About twenty years ago" (1787), was sharpened to, "In the latter end of 1766" (1791), and, "In the year 1766" (1801). This agrees with the definitely stated dating in the permanent John Street Church Records. Note—The famous letter of Thomas Taylor to John Wesley postulated Embury's start in New York as eighteen months before early-April 1768, or, early-October 1766.

3. *Strawbridge in Maryland*—The continuously used phrase, "About the same time", (calculated as in relationship to New York's definite date of 1766), is studiously indefinite. It could represent a period of a year or two either earlier or later than 1766—say, some time between 1764 and 1768. Note—Asbury was closely familiar with Strawbridge's area and work from November 1772 when he first assumed oversight of that circuit, to the end of his life. Asbury knew Strawbridge intimately, and mentions him over a dozen times in text of *Journal*. Asbury also names many of the persons converted by Strawbridge, or active in his work. Asbury travelled the Strawbridge territory north, south, east, and west across the years. Yet, with all this knowledge of persons and places, Asbury could not fit a closer date for Strawbridge's beginning than the indefinite phrase, "About the same time". It can only be concluded that Asbury knew no quotable document or record from which he could define a date for Strawbridge's origination of work, for the official historical statement in *Discipline*.

4. *Other possible locations*—On the matter of priority, no mention is made in *Discipline* or *Journal* either of St. George's, Philadelphia, or of Leesburg, Virginia. Again, Asbury was closely familiar with both locations from an early period. His first sermon, preached in America was delivered at St. George's, about November 1, 1771; and he was in and out of Philadelphia times without number. Leesburg is first mentioned in *Journal* under date of Thursday, April 29, 1776; but he had been near the location on earlier journeys, and knew many people of the society there, and of the area in general.

Conclusion—The definition of the New York date is correct. The continuous indefiniteness concerning Strawbridge's beginning rests on serious lack, even then, of dependable documents and records. No proper conclusion as to historic priority can be drawn from the formal historical statement in *Discipline* 1787-1816. Asbury should not be quoted, one way or the other, from this statement in *Discipline*.

2A. Minutes

No statement concerning priority appears in conference *Minutes*, that could properly be attributed to Asbury. Early *Minutes* contain little more than the personnel questions, the list of appointments, and brief statistical data.

3. Journal.

In Asbury's *Journal*, the entry for May 3, 1801, includes the following sentence:

"This settlement of Pipe Creek is the richest in the state: here Mr. Strawbridge formed the first society in Maryland—and *America*."

This entry appears on page 294, *Journal*, Vol. II, of the 1958 annotated edition. The attached footnote poses the problem of interpretation that has agitated the historians of the church for many years:

"The concluding words of the sentence, "and *America*," have created much discussion. Those who believe that Robert Strawbridge on Sam's Creek in Maryland antedated Philip Embury in New York City accept this entry in the *Journal* as genuine and authentic. Those who give the priority to New York explain the words "and *America*" either to be an interpolation in a section of the *Journal* which Asbury did not correct or prepare for the press, or point out that as a historian he was sometimes incorrect. (*Journal* II, 294, note.)

(The word, *America*, stands in italics in the formal printed edition of of *Journal* of 1821. There must have been a distinct underlining of the word in the hand-written manuscript used for typesetting. By this means special emphasis was to be given to the word. The later editions of 1852 and 1958 retain the italics for "*America*".)

Certain questions arise relative to this entry in *Journal*—

First—Is it a genuine element of Asbury's own writing in the original manuscript of *Journal*?

The earliest document in our possession containing this portion of *Journal* is the 1821 printed edition, prepared by Francis Hollingsworth, published 5 years after Asbury's death. The original text of *Journal* was lost in the 1836 fire, 15 years later than this edition of *Journal*. Apparently the carefully prepared hand-written transcript, from which the 1821 type was set, also perished. No word appears anywhere about it. And no reference to, "and *America*", appears in the extant writings of Asbury's contemporaries. Jesse Lee, publishing his significant "Short History of the Methodists in the United States", in 1810, makes no reference to this phrase. Note that he declares he had had access to "Mr. Francis Asbury's Journal, bound and unbound". (History, p. LV); and that his remarks concerning priority differ radically from the direct statement of the phrase in question. (ibid. p. 24-25).

In early June 1815, at Cambridge, NY., near Ashgrove, Asbury wrote: "I must reduce my projected tour of sixteen hundred miles to a straight ride of three hundred and eighty miles to New York and thence through Philadelphia to Little York (Pa.), and my son Francis Hol-

lingsworth." (*Journal*, II, 782.) Asbury spent the last of June to first week in July 1815 with Hollingsworth. Asbury wrote: "I sit seven hours a day, looking over and hearing read my transcribed journal: we have examined and approved to 1807. As a record of the early history of Methodism in America, my journal will be of use: and accompanied by the minutes of the conferences, will tell all that will be necessary to know. I have buried in shades all that will be proper to forget, in which I am personally concerned; if truth and I have been wronged, we have both witnessed our day of triumph." (*Journal*, II, 783.) The session with Hollingsworth, arranged in advance, was thus highly significant.

If the phrase, "and *America*," in entry of May 3, 1801, was a true and original part of Asbury's *Journal*, it must have been in the transcript reviewed so carefully with Hollingsworth in June 1815. If in the original, and thus considered in 1815, it then received Asbury's re-approval. Note, however, that it stands in strict contradiction of the historical statement, first published in 1787 *Discipline*, and regularly repeated in each subsequent edition without basic alteration.

This phrase in *Journal* is absolutely definite in reporting Pipe Creek society to have antedated Embury's in New York City. The sentence in *Discipline* is studiously indefinite, being interpretable as after Embury equally well as prior to his initial work. Asbury introduced the indefinite statement in 1787 *Discipline*, as representing his best historical knowledge after 15 years of intimate association with the work in the places involved. It is difficult to see how he could have authored the *Journal* phrase in 1801, re-affirming it in 1815 with Hollingsworth, without altering the earlier *Discipline* statement so as to agree with it. Further, if Jesse Lee had seen "and America", while reading *Journal* as a source for his own work, he undoubtedly would have referred to it, or, at least, would have drawn Asbury's attention to the inconsistancy. This Lee apparently did not do. Writing in *Journal*, June 26, 1810, Asbury says: "I have read Jesse Lee's History for the first time: it is better than I had expected. He has not always presented me under the most favorable aspect: we are all liable to mistakes, and I am unmoved by his." (*Journal*, II, 640-42.). There was marked coolness between Lee and Asbury. Had Lee been aware of these two statements—as both emanating from Asbury—there is no doubt but that he would have indicated the facts.

Second—What does textual-criticism of the documents of *Journal* suggest as to the authenticity of this phrase?

Even with the advantage of our critical apparatus and method, there appears to be no possibility of determining, with any certainty, the definite phrasing by Asbury at this point. The only area where his original manuscript is approached lies in the period of his earliest years, 1771 to April 1773, whose entries were printed in *The Arminian Magazine*. Asbury was quite critical of this printing, and felt that it did not adequately or correctly represent him. (In the recently published 3-volume

annotated edition, 1958, *Journal and Letters,* careful notation is made of the differences between the *Arminian* text and that of the 1821 edition of Hollingsworth. See *Journal,* I, xv-xvi; 3-75 and notes.)

Written in such notebooks as were available to him, or on fugitive loose sheets crudely tied together; taken from place to place in rough saddle-bags, and subject to the exigencies of the elements; left, in part, at some preacher's house pending a later visit; a considerable part actually being lost for a time (letter to Ezekiel Cooper Oct. 4, 1798—*Letters,* 174)—it is a miracle that Asbury was able to preserve a consecutive document for later publication.

At least seven different persons are named in *Journal* as having assisted Asbury before Hollingsworth took over. These were engaged in collating, arranging, and editing the original manuscript notebooks and sheets, and in transcribing them into a document suitable for his review and ultimate publication.

The number of transcripts that were made, and the resulting textual problem, even before Hollingsworth took charge in 1815, may be illustrated by references in certain of Asbury's letters:

1. Letter to Nelson Reed, March 22, 1810 (*Letters,* 426)—

"I wish to spend 5 or 6 days at Foxall's, in reading about 1000 pages of my journal in the 3rd copy now taking by John Dickins and Dr. Wilkins, in order to correct some names of places, and some other matters, and leave as perfect a copy behind me as I can. Everything personal, geographical, and prolix will go out, the most spiritual and historical parts will be reserved."

2. Letter to Mrs. Ann Willis, August 29, 1813 (*Letters,* 494)—

". . . Joseph Lanston, and myself have concluded he shall devote his time to finish the transcription of my journal. I wish a number or two at a time be sent to Doctor Wilkins to correct and abridge, because only the most interesting parts will be preserved. . . . you may read or cause to be read any parts you please."

Only those who have studied Asbury's extant letters know how difficult his chirography often is of interpretation. The variant readings recently produced by separate students from certain letters are startlingly different. The plates facing pages 206 and 207 in *Letters* are evidence of the problem facing any transcriber then, and now. The extant letters may be still closely studied and compared and a final text decided upon questionable points. However, the original manuscript of *Journal,* and the first attempts at transcription, are irretrievably lost. Nor are we in possession of, nor do we have any clue to, those intermediary files of editing and transcription that preceded Hollingsworth. Manuscripts by Asbury, and transcriptions, are a total blank. The earliest texts are the short, early sections appearing in *Arminian Magazine,* and the Hollingsworth edition of 1821. There is no knowledge of the original manuscripts from Asbury, or of the transcriptions from that, that preceded these first printings.

In his "Notice of the Transcriber", 1821 edition, Hollingsworth describes and laments the condition of the material even then submitted

to him. He says: "In places where the author has left, by inadvertance, a sentence unfinished, a thing not uncommon, the transcriber has always tried to supply what was wanting; and where hurry has occasioned evident mistakes, as is the case in a few instances, he has ventured upon correction; but he is not sure that in every attempt he has been successful." (Quoted in *Journal*, I, xxiii). It is to be regretted that Hollingsworth devised no method whereby his emendations and additions might be identified. In any given case, we may not be certain but that an abrupt or peculiar ending of a sentence is Hollingsworth's rather than Asbury's. Considering the inconsistancy and contradiction of the *Journal* phrase under consideration, as against the formal and repeated statement in *Discipline*, this problem and action of Hollingsworth adds a greater element of question against the authorship of "and *America*".

Another type of problem assailed Hollingsworth. He says: "The transcriber not infrequently found a confusion of dates; and sometimes, as he thinks, a mistake in the names of persons and things, more especially in the author's geographical notices of the districts through which he made his annual tour; the emendation, in the last particular, are not, it is to be feared, always correct." (ibid.). These uncounted tiny corrections and additions could be made only by crossing out the error, and writing in the correction or addition by interlineation or marginal notation, with signs to show the place of correction. Additions could be thus entered, with carat or other sign to indicate place for inclusion. Some copyist must then produce a clean and correct copy, for the pages cluttered by all the notation. There must be proof-reading, and all that. The 1958 editors declare: "A glance at one of the documents written by his own hand (letter) will show that extensive editing was necessary to cast his manuscripts in proper form." (*Journal*, I, xv.) How many people handled the document between Asbury's interview with Hollingsworth in June 1815, and the actual publication in 1821, no one can say.

A common error for which textual critics are always on the alert is the introduction into the actual text, of what had been a marginal note meant only as a comment, but which a copyist put into the text by error of judgement. As an explanation of "and America", this possibility cannot be ruled out by shap judgement. Indeed, it may well be the route along which this phrase reached the copy for type-setting in 1821.

Several suspicious elements of this sort are to be found in the extant text of *Journal*. To illustrate, reference may be made to two instances that are noted by the editors of the 1958 edition:

1. Entry for August 7, 1780, Vol. I, p. 312. Simple word of ejaculation: "True!" Footnote on the page explains this as a marginal comment by some editor prior to printing in 1821.

2. Entry for April 22, 1780, Vol. I, pages 345-6. A reference by Asbury to "brother Glendenning" and his strange manners. In the 1821 edition the following also appears: "See what a poor unsettled creature this Gemdenning was. This was long before he went into his mighty trances, visions, etc., that he talks so much about.

No wonder that a person of his selfish temper should behave as he has done to his brethren the Methodists.—W.S." The 1958 editors rightly withdrew this from text of *Journal,* entering it as footnote with explanation, on pages 345-6.

These instances show how a single word or simple phrase—or an element of several sentences—could easily find way into the text, and remain there, as though part of Asbury's original personal writing.

There remains the matter of final proof-reading, after the type-setting, but before the locking of the forms for printing. There are enough patent errors in spelling, punctuation, dating and format in the 1821 edition to indicate that this proof-reading was not thorough. Inaccuracies are fairly frequent. If they accurately reflect the transcript made for the type-setters, then that document was slip-shod. If they represent typographical errors despite a good transcript, then that process was faulty as well as the proof-reading. A major case of this sort of cumulative technical error is the misplacement, in the 1821 edition, of the entries for a total month. In that printing an hiatus appears from February 27 to March 26, 1772. Likewise, a section appears, from April 14, 1773 and onwards, that is evidently out of context. Careful study has revealed that the section appearing for part of April 1773, is in fact, the matter missing between February 27 and March 26, 1772. This error is corrected in the text of 1958 edition, full explanatory note standing at foot of page 21, Vol. I. However this error may have originated, it was not caught in the 1821 type-setting or proof-reading, to baffle later commentators until cleared up in 1958.

Summary—No definitive answer can be given to the question as to whether the phrase, "and *America*", was Asbury's composition. There was ample opportunity for the phrase to have been introduced into the text by way of some editorial emendation, or addition as the conclusion of what might have seemed to be an incomplete sentence. It could have come from a marginal note made by one of the many who handled the manuscripts of *Journal.* Either faulty type-setting or proof-reading could have been responsible. Also, in view of the basic contradictory position of the statement in *Discipline* and *Journal*, and the wide range of possibility of some non-Asbury source for "and *America*", the status of that phrase as a genuine and authentic utterance of Asbury is highly questionable.

Conclusion—1. One statement, definitely Asbury's—*Discipline*—is doubtless his best judgment on the basis of all the facts then obtainable. This statement, first appearing in 1787, was repeated, with no essential change, in many subsequent editions over which he held close supervision. Nevertheless, it is so indefinite as to time-priority that no decision for either Embury or Strawbridge may properly be deduced from it.

2. The second statement—"and *America*"—in *Journal,* is completely contradictory to *Discipline.* It is seriously questionable as to authorship,

on the grounds stated above. In that parlous position it cannot stand against *Discipline* on any question of authenticity or reliability.

3. No proper argument for either Embury or Strawbridge can be presented on the basis of these contradictory elements, one of which is so very questionable. Any ultimate denominational decision on priority must depend upon other facts, properly and unquestionably documented. No conclusion can be based on a statement, even though official, that is as indefinite as that in *Discipline*. If the case for some particular location must rest on the statement in *Journal,* with no other first-line documentation, that argument possesses no true cogency.

4. The phrase, "and *America*", should not be quoted as, or even assumed to be, a genuine word of Asbury, unless some unassailable documentary proof, at present unknown, be eventually found.

5. On the basis of all the foregoing, the writer strongly feels that no appeal to, or use of, either of these statements should be made, or recognized as valid, in our present discussion that may lead to a decision on priority.

UNION OF CHURCHES PROPOSED

At the recent meeting of the National Council of Churches in San Francisco Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, Stated Clerk of the United Presbyterian Church, proposed the union of the Methodist, United Presbyterian, Episcopal, and United Church of Christ bodies into one church, which he said would have more than 18,000,000 members, 41,000 churches, and 63,000 pastors. The address was widely publicized in the newspapers.

Bishop Gerald Kennedy, President of the Council of Bishops of the Methodist Church was quoted as saying that the Methodists were not greatly interested in the proposal. Bishop Nolan B. Harmon of Charlotte, North Carolina, has said that there was nothing new in the suggestion.

The Methodists have for years had a Commission on Church Union which has been negotiating with similar groups from the Episcopal and other churches on the subject of union.

Among the vice-presidents of the national council elected at San Francisco were two Methodists, Bishop John Wesley Lord of Washington, D. C., and Mrs. J. Fount Tillman of Lewisburg, Tennessee, president of the Woman's Division of Christian Service.

NOTES

WORKS OF JOHN WESLEY

A project to publish a definitive edition of John Wesley's works has been undertaken jointly by five U. S. seminaries. Cooperating in the effort, which is expected to result in about 35 volumes, are scholars at the theological schools of Southern Methodist University at Dallas, Emory University at Atlanta, Boston University, Drew University, Madison, N. J., and Duke University at Durham, North Carolina.

The Rev. Dr. Frank Baker, secretary of the Wesley Historical Society in England and currently visiting associate professor at Duke, is the archivist and bibliographer of the work.

METHODIST ITEMS FOR SALE

The Association of Methodist Historical Societies, Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, can furnish the following:

1. Colored post cards with the Salisbury portraits of John, Charles, and Susanna Wesley, Francis Asbury, and Dr. Thomas Coke. Two for five cents. A fine long post card of the World Methodist Building is five cents.

2. *The Warm Heart of Wesley,* by Elmer T. Clark, a study of Wesley's Aldersgate experience. $1.00

3. *A Voice in the Wilderness,* by Almer Pennewell, the biography of Jesse Walker, noted early preacher who founded Methodism in both St. Louis and Chicago.

4. Napkins with the famous John Wesley teapot are worth $1.00 for a package of fifty.

5. Kodochrome slides or transparencies of the Salisbury paintings of the Wesleys, Asbury, and Coke, the World Methodist Building, the Memorial Chapel, the lighted cross, and sunset scene at Lake Junaluska. Thirty-five cents, three for $1.00.

6. Small color prints of the Salisbury portrait of Susanna Wesley, fifteen cents.

7. Large color prints of the John Wesley and Asbury portraits are $2.00 each.

8. A beautiful view book of Lake Junaluska, with the Wesley and Asbury and other pictures in full color is $1.00. This fine book contains 78 pictures, including five of the World Methodist Building and interior

TENTH WORLD METHODIST CONFERENCE

The Tenth World Methodist Conference will be held at Oslo, Norway, on August 17-25, 1961, as previously announced. It will be immediately preceded by the World Federation of Methodist Women. Around one thousand persons are expected to attend from the Western Hemisphere. The program is now being arranged.

FREE LITERATURE

From the World Methodist Building, Lake Junaluska, North Caroline, the following literature may be secured free:

1. World Methodist Building, picture streamer in color.
2. Asbury Trail Award, Boy Scouts Award information.
3. Thomas Coke, by Warren Thomas Smith.
4. In the Smokies along the Asbury Trail, color picture reprint from *Together.*
5. American Methodism's Magna Charta, by Bishop Fred P. Corson, an address on the constitution of the church.
6. Lest We Forget, by Louise Stahl, early Methodist leaders in North Carolina, in color, illustrated.
7. World Methodist Council, Handbook of Information.
8. Methodistica, a catalog of selected items from the Elmer T. Clark collection of Wesleyana and Methodistica in the World Methodist Building. 44 pages.
9. *Nuclear Knowledge and Christian Responsibility,* by Prof. A. C. Coulson of Oxford University. Supply limited.
10. Epworth's Old Rectory, by Stanley Lewiston, simple sheet story of the home of the Wesleys.

FROM THE METHODIST PUBLISHING HOUSE

From any store of the Methodist Publishing House the following may be secured:

1. *The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury,* 3 vols., boxed. $21.00
2. *An Album of Methodist History,* by Elmer T. Clark, $3.95.
3. Large color reproductions of the Salisbury portraits of John Wesley, Susanna Wesley, and Francis Asbury, $3.00 unframed, $18.50 framed.
4. Small busts, 6 in. high, of Wesley and Asbury, $5.00 each.

COLLECTOR'S COLUMN

Rev. Hoyt L. Hickman, 520 35th Street, Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, is interested in buying Methodist Disciplines, hymnals, general minutes, General Conference journals, and similar works.

Rev. Elmer N. Hassell, 147 South Main Street, Lexington, Virginia, lists the following for sale:

Wakeley: *Lost Chapters,* 1858, 594 pp., rebound	$3.50
Daniels: *Illustrated History of Methodism in Great Britain and America,* 1880, 781 pp.	$3.00
Asbury: *Journal,* 1821, Vol. I	$7.50

BI-CENTENARY IN ANTIGUA

The Bi-Centenary of Methodism in the West Indies was celebrated at Antigua in October, 1960. Bishop Ivan Lee Holt was present as a representative of The Methodist Church, U.S.A.

In 1758 John Wesley preached to Nathaniel Gilbert, from Antigua, at Wandsworth in England, and he later baptized two Negro servants who accompanied Gilbert to England. On his return to the West Indies the planter, who was half brother to Sir Walter Raleigh, began preaching to the Negroes in his own house.

In 1778 John Baxter, a shipwright, went out to the fleet at English Harbor on Antigua, and he found the little group which had been left leaderless by the death of Gilbert and was trying to maintain itself. Baxter assumed oversight of the Negroes. He was elected an elder at the Christmas Conference in 1784, though he was not present. Dr. Thomas Coke was blown out of his course in 1787 and landed on Antigua. There he found and ordained Baxter.

In connection with the Bi-Centenary plans were made to acquire the Gilbert House, which still stands. West Indies Methodism is becoming an independent conference and will have headquarters at Port of Spain, Trinidad, the capital of the new West Indies Federation.

MICROTEXT COMMITTEE

ASSOCIATION OF METHODIST THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS

A committee set up by the Association of Methodist Theological Schools is at work assembling information on the whereabouts of unpublished material, especially autograph letters, journals, etc., of leaders of the early and middle periods of Methodist history in America.

This information is being gathered in order to have the materials microfilmed and thus made widely available to students of Methodist history. A beginning is being made with nine worthies:

1, Jesse Lee; 2, Orange Scott; 3, Ezekiel Cooper.

Information on these should go to Dr. R. M. Cameron, P. O. Box 166, Concord, Massachusetts.

4, Frederick Stier; 5, Nicholas Snethen; 6, John Emory.

Material on these is the special responsibility of Dr. Douglas R. Chandler, Wesley Theological Seminary, 4400 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington 16, D. C.

7, William McKendree; 8, William Capers; 9, Joshua Soule.

Material on these should go to Professor James W. May, Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta 22, Georgia.

News of the existence and location of any material as above described will be warmly appreciated by the members of the Committee.

WINDOWS IN CITY ROAD CHAPEL

A movement has been started in the United States to complete the installation of art glass windows in Wesley's Chapel in London. The famous chapel on City Road, visited by thousands of Americans and claimed as the Mother Church of Methodism, was erected by John Wesley in 1778.

It has a few beautiful windows, some of which were installed by Americans. However about ten are of plain glass.

At the General Conference in Denver in May, 1960, Mr. Irwin Raut of Sedalia, Missouri, proposed that these plain windows be replaced by art glass but no action was taken. In a later letter to *Together* magazine he reverted to the subject. There was a reply by Mr. Wilbur Van Sant of Baltimore, who offered a donation of $100 and urged the periodical to start the fund.

If others desire to share in this worthy project they should write to Dr. Leland Case, Editor of *Together,* 740 North Rush Street, Chicago 11, Illinois.

TO DEDICATE WESLEY STATUE

An equestrian statue of John Wesley will be dedicated on May 24th, anniversary of Wesley's Aldersgate experience, at Wesley Theological Seminary at Washington, D. C. The statue is a replica of the monument at the New Room in Bristol, England, and is the only equestrian Wesley statue in the world. It was presented to the Seminary by Lord Arthur Rank, noted British Methodist and motion picture magnate.

AMERICAN SECTION, WORLD COUNCIL

The Executive Committee of Section XIII of the World Methodist Council, representing The Methodist Church, U.S.A., will meet at the Methodist Publishing House in Nashville, Tennessee, on May 10, 1961. Among the major items of business will be a discussion of a new Constitution for the World Council, arrangements for the Oslo Conference, and recommendations for members of the Council for the next quadrennium. Members are elected by the Conference on nomination of the various sections. In The Methodist Church, U.S.A., the *Discipline* provides that the nominations are made by the Council of Bishops.

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